

# Personally Speaking

All About People

Volume 1, Issue 6

DIVISION OF MENTAL RETARDATION SERVICES

March, 2006

## Open Wide!

- How the West Is Being Won!
- Coming Alive!
- Lessons on Life
- Chances for Champions

## DMRS at Special Education Annual Conference



L to R: DMRS' Susan Moss and Kay Gunckel visit with advocate Trevia Maitland.

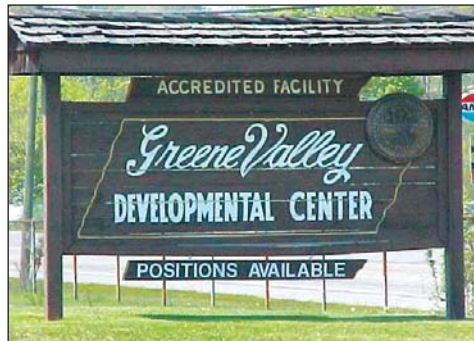
DMRS participated in the Tennessee Department of Education, Division of Special Education's annual conference in Nashville earlier this month. The Department of Education uses the



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## RELIEF! Greene Valley Developmental Center Dismissed from Lawsuit

Greene Valley Developmental Center (GVDC), located in Greeneville, Tennessee, is relieved of a 10-year lawsuit regarding institutional conditions at the center. A Federal Court order was signed Thursday, March 16th in Nashville. The Division of Mental Retardation Services (DMRS) had petitioned the court in 2001 for GVDC's dismissal.



In April, 1997 DMRS entered into a settlement agreement with the advocacy groups People First and the Parent/Guardian Association, and the United States Department of Justice (DOJ). The groups had sued the state a year earlier, charging violations of the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act (CRIPA) at Greene Valley and Clover Bottom Developmental Center in Nashville (*People First of Tennessee, et al., v. Clover Bottom Developmental Center, et al.*). CRIPA allows the DOJ to take action when it finds a pattern or practice of violations of residents' rights at government operated institutions.

"This is a significant milestone for Greene Valley and DMRS," said DMRS Deputy Commissioner Stephen H. Norris. "This

achievement validates the policies and measures DMRS has been instituting for some time regarding improvement of all its services. The State of Tennessee is very appreciative to Greene Valley Chief Officer



Dr. Henry Meece

Dr. Henry Meece and his staff for working diligently to bring Greene Valley into compliance with the settlement agreement. Their dedication and commitment can not be overstated."

Since the filing of the lawsuit in 1996 DMRS and GVDC have been diligently working to bring the center into compliance. A large number of staff were added and trained extensively.

The key component to GVDC's success has been its "partnership" approach to services between the persons who live at the facility and staff. GVDC works closely with residents, garnering advice and fashioning services from the feedback. Active treatment, the continuous process of assessment, development and implementation of support programs by clinicians and direct support staff, is also a vital part of the success.

"Prior to the lawsuit we were a very different organization," said Meece. "It has been the extraordinary effort by our staff and DMRS, which has led us to this point of not just complying, but exceeding the standards set by the agreement. We

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## PROVIDERS AND DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS TAKE NOTICE

# Protection from Harm Abuse Registry

The DMRS' Protection from Harm Abuse Registry includes names of persons involved in substantiated abusive, neglectful or exploitative acts towards vulnerable persons. The perpetrator's first and last name is listed; along with the date that person was placed on the registry.

"Protection from Harm has made a focused effort to treat cases of abuse, neglect and exploitation as seriously as possible," said Protection from Harm Director Debbie Payne. "Revised protocols have streamlined those definitions to bring DMRS in line with state statutes. In the first nine months of 2005, 39 persons were placed on the

registry, which is more than the previous nine years combined."

By law, provider agencies must check the registry before hiring a worker or volunteer. If a person is placed on the registry that person can not be hired or permitted to provide care. Also, once a person is placed on the list, he or she is "branded" and their name is never removed.

The Abuse Registry is maintained by the Tennessee Department of Health. The names are initially submitted for placement by various Departments and Divisions of Tennessee State Government.

The Protection from Harm listing can be found on the new DMRS website at [www.state.tn.us/dmrs](http://www.state.tn.us/dmrs). Click on the Protection from Harm link on the right side of the Home Page, and then click on Abuse Registry. The information pertains only to DMRS and is updated monthly.

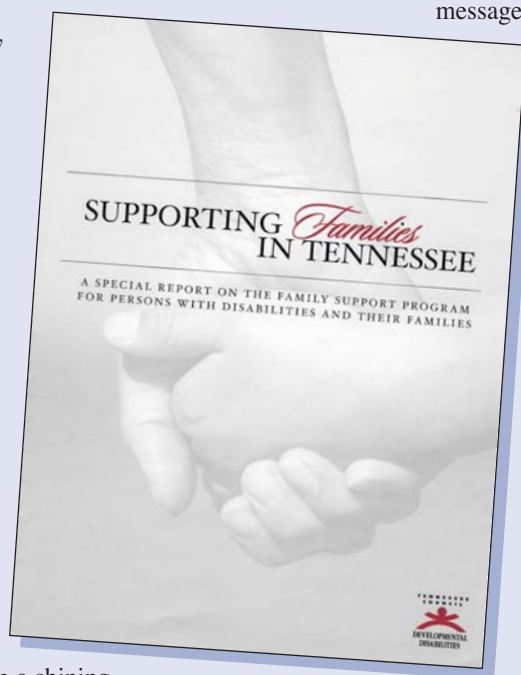
"The Abuse Registry is a very important tool for anyone providing services and supports to persons with mental retardation," said Payne. "It's like a shield, protecting one of Tennessee's most vulnerable populations. We will always work on new initiatives to assure that service recipients live and work in safe environments." ■

## Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities Showcases Family Support Program

The new booklet, *Supporting Families in Tennessee, a Special Report on the Family Support Program for Persons with Disabilities and Their Families* is informative, insightful and a very interesting read. The publication was produced by the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities through a Tennessee Family Support Outreach Project grant.

Superbly written and enhanced with touching photography and personal stories, the publication is a comprehensive description of the program.

"This was a very special undertaking for us and we are thrilled with the outcome," said Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities Director Wanda Willis. "We wanted this book to be a shining



message to persons with developmental disabilities and their families regarding the benefits and opportunities the Family Support Program offers. Everyone at DMRS was very supportive and helpful in bringing this project to fruition."

Ned Solomon, the Council's director of Partners in Policymaking, provided the text and Deana Claiborne of United Cerebral Palsy of Middle Tennessee, the photography.

Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities

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## From the Desk of Deputy Commissioner Stephen H. Norris

As you probably know now, having heard or read the story on the front page of this newsletter, DMRS, and



The work done by Dr. Meece and his staff has been remarkable. The requirements for compliance dictated in the Settlement Agreement were a tall order, but GVDC would not be deterred. Greene Valley responded, rolling up its sleeves and charging ahead full bore. To the staff at the center: Congratulations and thank you! Your pride, dedication and commitment are unmatched. You have elevated service delivery to excellence. You have set the bar extremely high, which is a good thing. If we all strive to meet your standards, DMRS will be a very healthy organization.

particularly Greene Valley Developmental Center have reason to celebrate. A Federal court in Nashville recently dismissed Greene Valley from its 10-year lawsuit, specifically related to institutional conditions at the center.

This is a significant accomplishment in that it says how far Greene Valley has come in its services and supports, and makes clear that the Division is on the right track with its programs and practices.

Many other challenges remain. We will continue our efforts to establish and meet high standards of performance throughout the rest of the system. A strong plan is being developed for our clients at Arlington Developmental Center for their transition into the community. There is progress across the board at DMRS. One thing is certain, if we use Greene Valley's work and accomplishment as a touchstone, the Division has a very bright future. Once again, my best to Greene Valley on a job well done! ■

## Employment Incentives for Hiring the Disabled

Last summer Governor Phil Bredesen signed into law a bill which provides incentives for Tennessee employers to hire, work with, train and mentor persons with disabilities who receive state services. The move garnered immediate interest and has proven successful. Below is a summary of the law.

**Interested parties should contact Randy Hilliard at the Tennessee Department of Revenue, 615-532-6912**

Public Chapter 490 enacts a new franchise and excise tax credit for the employment of persons with disabilities who are receiving state services directly related to those disabilities. The credit is \$5,000 for each qualifying net new full-time job and \$2,000 for each qualifying net new part-time job. A full-time job must be permanent, provide at least 37 1/2 hours of work per week for at least 12 consecutive months, and include minimal health care benefits. A part-time job must provide at least 10 hours of work per week for at least 12 consecutive months. The credit is available only to taxpayers who participate in an existing employment incentive program pursuant to which persons with disabilities are being served by certain state agencies listed in the act. To qualify for the credit, the taxpayer must file a plan with the Department of Revenue on or before the last day of the fiscal year in which the employment begins and the Department of Finance and Administration must certify the taxpayer's eligibility for the credit under the act.

Effective date: Tax periods ending on or after July 1, 2006. ■

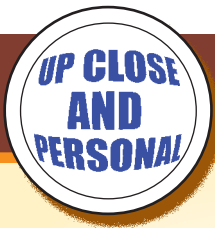
## Special Ed Conf...cont.

conference to relay best practices, new policy and essential information to educators and provider agencies across the state.

The DMRS Consumer and Family Services Unit had an

exhibit at the event and distributed information packets on Division services and supports. During one of the sessions Director of Consumer Services Kay Gunckel conducted a presentation on the DMRS program. DMRS and the Division of Special Education work closely to ensure that parents of school-age children stay informed. ■

 **Annual Conference  
Special Education**



# How the West Is Being Won!

## New DMRS Sheriff in West Region Earning Respect

She's quick on the draw with solutions – and wit! When Division of Mental Retardation Services (DMRS) Deputy Commissioner Stephen H. Norris lassoed Cate Newbanks to become the West Regional Director he couldn't have imagined he would be getting the female version of Wyatt Earp! Newbanks galloped in from Virginia last November, hit the ground running, and hasn't slowed. If you see a dust storm in the vicinity of Memphis, it's Newbanks going through her daily paces.

"Cate is a doer, she gets things accomplished," said Norris. "When she came in for her interview I knew within minutes she was the one for the job. Cate



has an impressive resume and her work here in just a few short months validates her past experiences. We're fortunate to have her."

"I've been very impressed with Cate," said Carol Greenwald, President of The Arc of Tennessee. "She has reached out to the families and advocates; there is an open line of communication at all times. She's



been an infusion of energy; very aggressive in making things happen. I enjoy working with her and expect us to accomplish much in the future."

Growing up in rural South-Central Illinois, Newbanks had designs on becoming either an actress or activist. Her parents and grandparents were always helping people. Hers is a strong, sensitive, and caring family. Let's just say the apple didn't fall far from the tree.

"I grew up very socially conscious, I'm a product of my family roots," said Newbanks. "However, I've been accused of being the gypsy rebel of the clan. I like change and have strong views on what is right and wrong. I've just always wanted to make things better and will go to great lengths to attain a successful outcome. At times it requires more than a tepid approach to get things done."

But for parental concern Newbanks could have been making things better in Hollywood right now. Coming out of high school, with Katherine Hepburn as her idol and inspiration, Cate had offers from the theater and arts departments at Stanford University and the University of Loyola-Chicago. However, her protective parents wanted her close to home and stopped the silver screen soiree.

Newbanks did eventually satisfy her thespian yearnings, working at the Burt Reynolds Dinner Theater in Clearwater, Florida and the Great American People's Show in Illinois. In Illinois she worked with actor Gary Cole, who the past few years starred as the Vice-President on NBC's West Wing. Also, she worked with Jane Seymour, Elizabeth Montgomery, Hal Holbrook and June Lockhart on a made-for-television movie.

After a few years reality took center stage. Marriage and children necessitated a permanent career change. Newbanks eventually raised two daughters and a son, worked full-time, and put herself through college, obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Welfare Studies and a Masters degree in Child, Family and Community Studies at the University of Illinois.

"My children have always been my life," said Newbanks. I had responsibilities and it was time to turn the page to the next chapter. All three are successful professionals now and I'm very proud of that. It might have been hard at times, but I feel my life has been perfect – something right out of a storybook."

"Hoorays for Hollywood" were silenced. Sounding the praises of social service began.

Newbanks first taste of activism came in college when she served as an intern on the Illinois Conference of Churches Economic Crisis Project, a program that focused on equity and worker displacement related to steel mill and coal mine closings in the state. Newbanks worked extensively with the Illinois legislature.

Newbanks spent her first three years out of school working as a nursing home Psycho-Social Rehabilitation Director. One day her former boss on the Economic Crisis Project appeared, lobbying her to apply for



# From the Heart Going to the Dogs!



**Alpo's angry! Milk-Bone's mad! Purina's praying!** DMRS' From the Heart doggie treats has got em' on the run! Pretty soon it's going to be From the Heart from coast to coast. DMRS Director of Development and "Master Marketer" Merlin Littlefield is working with humane shelters all across the country to provide them with the treats for fundraising.

"We're getting tremendous feedback and feel this project is really going to take off," said Littlefield. "This will be great exposure for DMRS and profitable for our people at Clover Bottom Developmental Center who are making the treats."

The From the Heart program features residents at DMRS' three developmental centers crafting and producing a variety of products such as the treats, bird houses and greeting cards. The items are sold at Tennessee State Parks and various businesses.

Shelters can purchase part or all of a treat display. The "all-natural" munchies are shown on a dog house sitting atop a fire hydrant. The 16 ounce bags are sold by the dozen.

Pretty soon Bow Wow's all across America won't bark and moan, cause' they'll be chowing down on a From the Heart bone! ■



## A Paw Lickin' Good Fundraiser!

*From the Heart to Their Tummies!*



**Want a creative and fun way to bring dollars to your association? We've got an idea that will make you want to roll over and bark!**

How about "all-natural" doggie treats? Sixteen ounces of the best protein and fiber you'll ever dig up! Rovers rave about the taste! Owners are attracted to the cause!

Make our treats available to your public and those doggone dollars will start scampering in!



**Here's the Scoop on Cleaning Up!**

**Our Paw Print**

Alesia Massey • 615-231-5420 (P) • 615-231-5419 (F)  
[Alesia.Massey@state.tn.us](mailto:Alesia.Massey@state.tn.us) • Harold Jordan Center, 259 Stewart's Ferry Pike, Nashville, TN 37214

**Your Paw Print**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Association: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Retrieving**

Our durable and lightweight displays are made of yellow pine, Masonite, high-density cardboard, MDF board and PVC pipe. Displays are optional; please specify.

Description	Cost	Quantity	Total
• Dog house with fire hydrant (width - 16", length - 22", height - 29")	\$150.00	_____	\$ _____
• Dog house only (width - 17", length - 16", height - 20")	\$ 75.00	_____	\$ _____
• Doggie treats (per dozen bags) Suggested retail - \$4.99 each	\$ 36.00	_____	\$ _____
• Plus shipping and handling			\$ _____
<b>Grand Total</b>			\$ _____

\*These treats are created by Tennesseans with developmental disabilities.

## Greene Valley Lawsuit...cont.

have made a difference in the life of every person who lives at Greene Valley. Our staff and residents have elevated service delivery to another level."

GVDC's effort was recognized last summer when it received accreditation

from The Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL). Only six facilities in the country have gained that honor. The CQL evaluates services provided to persons with disabilities, and consults with organizations on positive systems changes. ■

# Medical Message

**Dr. Adadot Hayes, M.D., DMRS Medical Director**

## The Role of Therapeutic Services

*Dr. Hayes is having members of her staff pen columns for Personally Speaking. This message was written by DMRS Therapy and Nutrition Services Coordinator Karen Wills.*

**T**herapeutic services include physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech language pathology, audiology, nutrition, and orientation and mobility services. Therapeutic service clinicians assist individuals in overcoming barriers to accomplishing personal goals and to attain and maintain optimal health and safety related to day-to-day tasks and activities.

Some of the many things therapeutic services providers can assist an individual with include improving balance when walking; communicating wants, needs and feelings; learning to eat a healthy diet; eating safely; adapting tasks and environments to meet physical and/or sensory needs; improving work-related skills; and developing independence in getting around a home when there are visual impairments.

The need for a therapeutic service assessment may be identified in a variety of ways. People moving from a developmental center may have received therapeutic services and supports that may need to be reassessed as they move into the community and adjust to their new environments and establish new daily routines. For others who are currently living in the community, the independent support coordinator, case manager, family, guardian, residential or day service providers, advocates, and/or the primary care physician may identify therapeutic service needs.

The following are common areas of concern for individuals with mental



*Dr. Adadot Hayes, M.D.  
DMRS Medical Director*

retardation and developmental disabilities and can be assessed by the corresponding clinician:

### Occupational Therapist

- Eating and drinking
- Sensory defensiveness, self-injurious behaviors
- Oral hygiene
- Bathing and other activities of daily living

### Physical Therapist

- Wheelchair positioning
- Alternate positioning
- Transfers
- Mobility

### Speech Language Pathologist

- Eating and drinking
- Communication

### Audiologist

- Unrecognized hearing loss
- Adapting environments to help with hearing issues
- Adapting to hearing aids

### Nutritionist

- Eating healthy, following special diets and menu planning
- Impact of genetic disorders, etc. on dietary needs
- Drug-nutrient interactions
- Impact of nutrition on chronic diseases

### Orientation and Mobility (O&M)

- Impact of severe visual impairment/blindness on daily function
- Making use of other sensory systems (i.e. vision, hearing, touch, etc.) in order to make sense of the day
- Accessing the environment

When there are issues of concern in the above areas, an assessment may be indicated. An assessment should clearly identify how individual limitations are impacting function in order to justify the need for any recommended services. A plan of care is then drafted to include recommended goals, interventions, and timeframes for completion. Assessment recommendations should identify interventions needed to support the person across environments (i.e. home, work, community) as appropriate. The individual and his/her Circle of Support determine to what extent they desire recommended services to address their areas of concern and the Planning Team develops functional and measurable actions in the Individual Support Plan that are to be addressed by the clinician.

Therapeutic services are provided when they are necessary to provide strategies or techniques for promoting an individual's health and safety or to address a barrier to the individual achieving an important outcome or goal. When the individual is at risk due to health and safety issues, direct support staff and clinical providers need to collaborate on the development of staff instructions, which outline necessary techniques for carrying out certain daily activities. In order for these techniques to make an impact, they must be used by all staff responsible for assisting the individual and be consistently incorporated in the individual's daily routine (i.e. the residential staff and day staff must all use the correct positioning, food preparation and eating techniques developed by the clinician for an individual prone to choking since, of course, the clinician will not be in attendance at each meal). Staffs need to inform the clinician when these techniques are not working.

When there is a barrier to the individual achieving an outcome or goal, the clinician's role is to develop techniques to overcome the barrier. For example, an individual wants to increase the amount of spending money he has by improving his production speed at work. However, he is extremely awkward in using his hands and has been frustrated in his attempts to work faster. The clinician may develop an assistive device or alternative approach to

## Medical Message...cont.

the task that the individual could use to improve his performance and earn more money. The clinician may also recommend other activities that can be incorporated into his daily routine that may also improve his dexterity. These could be provided in the form of staff instructions for staff to carry out on a consistent basis according to a schedule.

Clinicians may provide direct hands-on skilled services for an individual in order to build specific skills, trial assistive devices, and determine appropriate strategies to promote skills. These services should be provided in the natural setting appropriate to the task. Only rarely will the clinician work directly with an individual in a setting apart from his support staff and/or daily routine, and then for a limited duration. Once the individual reaches a certain level with the new skill, or is ready to use an assistive device on a regular basis, support staff must learn to carry out the procedure since the clinician will not be on site to conduct it often enough to benefit the person. This can be accomplished through the development and use of staff instructions.

Once the staff has learned the necessary techniques, the clinician's role is to monitor whether the techniques are working for the person or need to be revised, whether staff are able to carry them out correctly or need more training, and to assess the person's progress. Staffs need to inform clinicians when these techniques are not working. Data is obtained and analyzed to determine progress, lack of progress or maintenance of a stable status. Any necessary changes are discussed, considered, and implemented as appropriate.

Consequently, the provider and clinician must plan together how to implement the interventions and how they can be integrated into the individual's daily routine within an appropriate staffing plan for the group of individuals for which the staff is responsible.

Working together, clinicians and direct support professionals/families can assist individuals to meet their personal goals, improve skills, improve health and safety and live a more active, involved and meaningful life. ■

## Up Close...cont.

the Executive Director's position with the Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Illinois. She got the job and from that point on various social services departments in Illinois, and later Virginia and Florida would never be the same.

While with the Alliance, Newbanks received a Presidential invitation to the White House for the signing of the American Disabilities Act. She calls standing behind President Clinton in the Rose Garden for that ceremony one of the proudest moments of her life.

Also, at the Alliance Newbanks was a guest on a radio talk show discussing the Governor's budget cuts, in which mental health resembled an arterial bleed. Newbanks remembers the interview well.

"I wasn't happy with the Governor's decisions. I said, 'The Governor is balancing the budget on the backs of the mentally ill of Illinois. It is not going to be a good decision. In social services it is pay me now or pay me later.'

"Almost as soon as I got back to work the Governor's Office called. The Human Services' Chief wanted to see me. I was escorted into her office and she asked somewhat sarcastically why the Governor should appoint me as Inspector General for Illinois Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities. I told her I didn't know that I already had a job."

One thing led to another and the Human Services Chief asked for recommendations on improving the Inspector General's Office. Newbanks, quick to the draw even then, always carried around a file on recommendations for Illinois government. She pulled a bulging folder out of her briefcase.

The next day Newbanks accepted an offer to become Inspector General. During her tenure she began

reformation of the Illinois mental health system and expanded the Inspector General's Office from 12 staff to 64.

At one point she went undercover, checking into a troubled Chicago Reed State Hospital for the Mentally Ill for three days. She was not pleased with her findings, and upheaval would be a mild term to describe what transpired. Simply put, major changes in training and procedures were soon forthcoming. Newbanks won a national advocacy and public service award for her investigation.

Saving the world can lead to a nomadic life and after three years Newbanks was ready for a new challenge. She asked



*DMRS West Regional Director Cate Newbanks works with her main deputy C.J. McMorran.*

the Governor to create a program at the University of Illinois-Chicago. Her new adventure had her as Program Director for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services' Behavioral Health and Welfare Project.

There she developed the Comprehensive Assessment and Response Training System, a hospital-based program for at-risk youth. In the program a multi-disciplinary team follows and assists a child upon his or her hospital discharge. The system proved highly successful and is running strong today.

Another three years passed and this time Newbanks was in the market for luggage. She was recruited to Virginia as the Chief Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance

# F • R • I • E • N • D • S



## Adult Siblings of Individuals with Disabilities Research

We know surprisingly little about the relationship between individuals with disabilities and their adult siblings. To better understand this long-lasting relationship, we have created the **Adult Sibling Questionnaire** for anyone age 18 or over with a sister or brother with disabilities. This is a project of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center's National Sibling Research Consortium and The Arc of the U.S.

The Adult Sibling Questionnaire has questions in the following general areas:

- You
- Your Sibling with Disabilities
- Your Family
- Joint Activities and Involvement
- Support Needs of Brother/Sister
- Your Health and Well-Being
- Reflections on Your Relationship with your Brother/Sister

The questionnaire should take 20-25 minutes to complete, all answers are anonymous, and participation is voluntary. A summary of the results of the questionnaire will be provided to those who request it. In addition, the findings will be presented at the 2006 Arc National Conference in San Diego, and in Arc and other publications and scientific journals.

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The Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities, in partnership with the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development, has funded Tennessee Disability Pathfinder since 1997. Pathfinder is a bilingual information and referral office for individuals with disabilities of all ages and all disabilities. Pathfinder provides information and referrals to disability-related services and resources through an online resource database, a printed directory, a toll-free information line, and public awareness activities.

Between September 2004-January 2006, under a grant from the Administration on Developmental Disabilities awarded to the Council, Pathfinder conducted a pilot Hispanic outreach project, Project Conexión. The purpose of Project Conexión was to assist underserved Hispanic individuals with disabilities and their families by increasing their knowledge of available disability services and community supports while improving access to



*Disability Services and the Nashville Hispanic Community conference.*

*cont. next page*



Have you ever had a question and wasn't sure where to turn for the answer? Have you ever needed information but wasn't sure where to get it? Have you ever needed guidance or referral?

The Arc of Tennessee is here to hook you up! The Arc has been supporting families for over 50 years. We provide guidance to individuals and families looking for help. Staff and volunteers of The Arc of Tennessee regularly provide information and referral to any caller searching for assistance. If we don't know the answer, we do the searching and find out the answer! We also serve as a source of information on disabilities, making every effort to present citizens with disabilities in a positive light.

The Arc of Tennessee also offers various education, training and planning programs for families and people with disabilities. We make every effort to be a bridge among individuals with disabilities and the community. We are a co-sponsor of the annual Tennessee Disability MegaConference. For more information on the conference visit [www.tndisabilitymegaconference.org](http://www.tndisabilitymegaconference.org).

The Arc is a membership organization. There are 21 local chapters of The Arc in Tennessee. Our dream is to have local chapter presence in all 95 counties! We encourage every family to join The Arc, become part of our collaboration and help us to shape the supports and services needed to continually improve the safety and quality of life for Tennessee's citizens with disabilities. Your support helps us help others!

*cont. next page*

# F · R · I · E · N · D · S cont.

## Vanderbilt Kennedy Center...cont.

**If you are 18 years of age or older and have a brother or sister with disabilities, please participate!**

The online version of the questionnaire is at <https://kc.vanderbilt.edu/FamilyResearch>

Paper copies are also available. Call or email your contact information (name, address, city, state, zip) to: Family Research phone: 1.888.322.5339 [free] or email: [FamilyResearch@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:FamilyResearch@vanderbilt.edu)

We sincerely appreciate your time and interest in this important area of family research. Questions? Call 615-322-8238 or email [jan.rosemergy@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:jan.rosemergy@vanderbilt.edu). Thank you!

## Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Conferences

### Down syndrome and Autism: Improving Supports and Services for Individuals with Co-Occurring Conditions

**Saturday, April 8, 2006**

8 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Room 241, Vanderbilt/Peabody campus

Co-Sponsors: Down syndrome Association of Middle Tennessee, Autism Society of Middle Tennessee, Mid-Tennessee Interdisciplinary Instruction in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (MIND)

For family members, advocates, school personnel, and related service providers. Topics include current status of co-occurrence, referrals and diagnosis, family issues, medication management, coordinated care, and resources. \$15 fee to cover lunch and workshop expenses. For details, see <http://kc.vanderbilt.edu>. To register, call (615) 386-9002 or email [DSAMT@bellsouth.net](mailto:DSAMT@bellsouth.net).

### Improving Care Coordination for People with Dual Diagnosis

**Wednesday, June 7, 2006**

8:30 a.m.-4:15 p.m.

Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Room 241, Vanderbilt/Peabody campus

Co-Sponsors: Community Inclusion Project, Vanderbilt Kennedy Behavior Analysis Clinic; Mid-Tennessee Interdisciplinary Instruction in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (MIND)

For family members, advocates, residential service providers, psychiatrists, health care providers, related service providers, and behavior analysts who work with individuals with a dual diagnosis of developmental disabilities and mental illness. Topics covered include autism spectrum disorders, special health care needs, and transition to adulthood.

Continental breakfast and lunch provided. No conference fee. Validated parking available for those who pre-register by May 31. Call (615) 322-8185 or email [bac@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:bac@vanderbilt.edu). ■

## TCDD ...cont.

available programs. The key to the success of the project was having a Bilingual Outreach Worker located at the Woodbine Community Organization in Southeast Nashville, an area with a large number of Hispanic residents.

Project Conexión convened an Advisory Board, consisting of 13 individuals representing a range of local agencies and organizations that work with the Hispanic community, which gave valuable feedback and recommendations. It also partnered with the Mental Health Association of Middle Tennessee and Metro Social Services to develop a new Hispanic Community Database.

Prior to Project Conexión, Pathfinder bilingual staff had assisted an average of 6-7 Hispanic clients per quarter, a total of 80 individuals in two and a half years. During the twelve months that bilingual Conexión staff was situated at the Woodbine Center, information and referral assistance was

given to a total of 177 clients, an average of about 42 Hispanic clients per quarter. The most frequent service needs were for health care services, financial assistance, health insurance information, general information and referral services, employment related, and legal counseling.

In order to expand potential assistance to Hispanic individuals with disabilities, Project Conexión sponsored two workshops. The "Power of Communication" workshop was conducted in Spanish and attended by 40 agency representatives. The "Disability Services and the Nashville Hispanic Community" conference was conducted in English and attended by 63 agency representatives. The workshops trained agency representatives to communicate effectively with clients with disabilities and their families and with other agencies, offered an opportunity for networking among agencies, and provided information on disability-related services available in Spanish in Davidson County. Both workshops received very strong evaluations from participants.

Due to a documented need for Hispanic outreach services in the community and the success of this project, services will continue as part of the Disability Pathfinder program, supported by both the Vanderbilt Kennedy University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities and the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities. ■

## The ARC...cont.

The Arc is offering complimentary one-year memberships to individuals/families receiving services through the Division of Mental Retardation Services. If you would like to become a member, please call 1-800-835-7077 or 615-248-5878 or visit our website at [www.thearctn.org](http://www.thearctn.org). ■



# Coming Alive!

## SRVS' Sensory Garden

*Diana Fedinec, SRVS*

Shelby Residential and Vocational Services (SRVS) has a unique place for people with developmental disabilities – a Sensory Garden.

The garden took conceptual “root” as part of a \$5,000 grant from the Madonna Circle, a Memphis Catholic service organization, after several employees and their service recipients had expressed a desire to have a safe place to walk around outdoors as part of their daily therapy, or when taking a break from working at SOS Industries. SOS provides a sheltered workplace for disabled employees to work in a safe and monitored environment.

“The idea behind the garden went beyond the consideration of a safe walking place for our service recipients,” said SRVS Executive Director Jeffrie Bruton. “We wanted to offer an outdoor learning environment where our individuals could be stimulated by outdoor activities.”

And so the seeds were planted. Since the award of the grant, the garden has developed into a place where one can experience the delights of nature through touch, smell, sight, sound and taste. Many donors and volunteers were cultivated and assisted with building a greenhouse, arbor, bird houses, rock garden, wind chimes, murals, raised flower bed, glider, and a sidewalk along the perimeter of the garden. SRVS service recipients were also involved in

the project through mural-painting contests, painting bird houses and constructing wind chimes. Future plans call for installation of a watering system and waterfall, and perhaps budding enterprises like growing vegetables and a nursery.

The garden is designed to provide horticultural therapy and vocational skill-building opportunities. It’s already a place of enchantment for many, including client Gary Elliott. “The garden is a place where I can go with my walker and sit down to enjoy the sun.”

SRVS is the largest, most comprehensive service provider for people with developmental disabilities in West Tennessee. The non-profit agency has been serving Memphis and Shelby County for over 40 years, and has a client base of more than 900 individuals. For more information about the garden, please contact Marta Vinzant, SRVS Development Coordinator at 901-869-9234, or visit the agency’s website at [www.srvs.org](http://www.srvs.org). ■



## LESSONS ON LIFE

Courtesy of DMRS Advisory Council Member Dan Steffan

There was a man who had four sons. He wanted his sons to learn not to judge things too quickly. He sent them each on a quest, in turn, to go and look at a pear tree that was a great distance away.

The first son went in the winter, the second in the spring, the third in summer and the youngest son in the fall.

When they had all gone and come back, he called them together to describe what they had seen.

The first son, who went in the winter, said that the tree was ugly, bent, and twisted.

The second son, who went in the spring, said it was covered with green buds and full of promise.

The third son, who went in the summer, disagreed; he said it was laden with blossoms that smelled so sweet and looked so beautiful, it was the most graceful thing he had ever seen.

The last son, who went in the fall, disagreed with all of them; he said it was ripe and drooping with fruit, full of life and fulfillment.

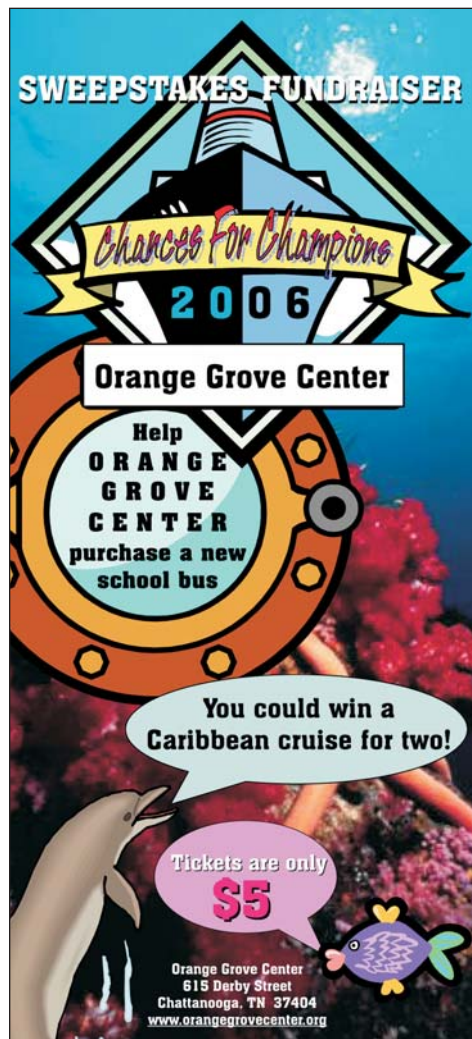
The man then explained to his sons that they were all right, because they had each seen only one season in the tree's life.

He told them that you cannot judge a tree, or a person, by only one season, and that the essences of who they are and the pleasure, joy, and love that come from that life can only be measured at the end, when all the seasons are up.

If you give up when it's winter, you will miss the promise of your spring, the beauty of your summer, fulfillment of your fall.

**Moral lessons:** Don't let the pain of one season destroy the joy of all the rest, don't judge life by one difficult season, persevere through the difficult patches and better times are sure to come. ■

## Orange Grove Center Cruisin' for a New School Bus



**Jan Hollingsworth, OGC**

Orange Grove Center (OGC) is holding its first ever Chances for Champions Sweepstakes Fundraiser, which will run through April. The proceeds from this State of Tennessee-approved raffle event will purchase a new school bus for the Center's transportation program. This will allow the Center to further its efforts toward offering OGC clients the freedom, independence and increased quality of life that comes with mobility and community access.

The winner of the 2006 Chances for Champions raffle will

receive a five-day Caribbean cruise package for two, including airfare to and from the port-of-call. Tickets are \$5.00 and only 10,000 will be sold. Tickets are also being offered in bundles for companies and businesses that might want to purchase them for use as employee appreciation or incentive gifts.

The drawing will take place on Friday, April 28th at Orange Grove's annual Breakfast for Champions. Ticket purchasers do not have to be present to win.

Executive Director, Kyle Hauth, commented, "Orange Grove Center has been serving our community's children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities for 53 years now, and there has never been a brighter more hopeful time for those challenged with special needs. However, as transportation costs soar, Orange Grove Center is calling on the generosity of the entire greater Chattanooga community to help the facility meet the goal of purchasing a new school bus."

To purchase individual or bulk tickets, contact Orange Grove Center's Development Office at 423-308-1160, Jan Hollingsworth, Director, [jhollingsworth@orangegrovecenter.org](mailto:jhollingsworth@orangegrovecenter.org), stop by Orange Grove's main campus at 615 Derby Street in Chattanooga or purchase on-line by visiting the website at [www.orangegrovecenter.org](http://www.orangegrovecenter.org). ■



*Orange Grove Center kicks off its Chances for Champions campaign with a pep rally.*

## Up Close...cont.

Abuse Services. It was in this position that Newbanks worked closely with present DMRS Assistant Commissioner Dr. Larry Latham.

This time it took two-and-a-half years for Newbanks to find a new cause. She became the Director of Child and Adult Welfare for the Commonwealth of Virginia. That same amount of time elapsed before she was off to Florida as the Deputy Secretary for Children and Family Services. It was here in 2004 that Newbanks realized she needed a break.

"It was time to hang up the boxing gloves," said Newbanks. "I had devoted so much effort and energy to my career; I just decided it was time to let someone else fight the good fight. I wanted some time for myself to be with my family. So I resigned, relaxed, moved back to Virginia and started making jewelry."

In between bracelets and pendants Newbanks assisted her boyfriend, a contractor, in renovating houses. One day in the middle of pulling old wiring out of a home Newbanks' cell phone rang. Dr. Latham, DMRS' resident Sherlock Holmes, had tracked her down and was calling from Nashville.

"I asked Cate what she was doing now," said Latham. "She said, 'pulling wiring out of a house.' I said, 'no, what are you doing career-wise?' She said, 'pulling wiring out of houses.'"

"I told her we needed help, that our West Regional Director was retiring, and she needed to come and fill the breach. "I talked her into trading her jeans and work boots for business suits. In Virginia she was my superior, here I'm hers. Paybacks are double!"

"This position is special and one of the highlights of my career," said Newbanks. "I receive daily reinforcements on why I enjoy this job so much. I get to have personal contact with the persons we serve and their families. Nothing is more rewarding than facilitating and seeing positive change in their lives.

"I feel we'll be on the right track when all Tennesseans with mental retardation can live safely where they choose, and participate fully in their communities. I'm very happy I was afforded this opportunity, and decided to move to Tennessee."

DMRS is too! ■

# TENNESSEE DISABILITY MEGAConference



**Conference Dates: June 15-18, 2006**

Name			
Affiliation			
Mailing Address			
City, State, Zip			
Phone ( )	Fax ( )	Email	
<b>Date Form Completed:</b>			
I am: <input type="checkbox"/> Person with a disability <input type="checkbox"/> Family Member <input type="checkbox"/> Paid Direct Support Provider <input type="checkbox"/> Professional in the field			
Your Arrival Date: _____		Departure Date: _____	

<u>Registration Type</u> (check all that apply)	<u>Early-Bird Registration</u> Return by May 1, 2006	<u>Regular Registration</u> May 2, 2006 thru June 1, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Conference	\$150	\$175
<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday	\$60	\$85
<input type="checkbox"/> Friday	\$60	\$85
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	\$60	\$85

**SPECIAL EVENTS:**

<input type="checkbox"/> 60's Night (Friday Evening)	Included with full conference or Friday registration	
<input type="checkbox"/> DSP Luncheon (Saturday) OR		
<input type="checkbox"/> People First Luncheon (Saturday)	\$19.00	\$19.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Awards Banquet & Dance (Saturday Evening)	\$27.00	\$27.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Inspirational Breakfast (Sunday, June 18)	Included with full conference or Saturday registration	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>		
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	\$

**\*If you register the day of the conference, MEALS ARE NOT INCLUDED.**

**PAYMENT OPTIONS**

Credit Card (check one)

☐ VISA

☐ MC

Please charge \$\_\_\_\_\_ to my credit card.

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

***\*we can only accept Visa or MasterCard***

☐ Check

PLEASE ENCLOSE YOUR CHECK MADE PAYABLE TO: The Arc of TN

☐ Stipend

PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR COMPLETED STIPEND APPLICATION WITH YOUR REGISTRATION FORM AND PAYMENT FOR SATURDAY'S LUNCH

**ROOM RESERVATIONS SHOULD BE MADE DIRECTLY WITH THE HOTEL BY CALLING 1-888-403-6772.**

(Unless you applied for a stipend.)

**► IF YOU NEED SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS OR RESPITE CARE, PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN THE ATTACHED FORM.**

**Please send completed Registration Forms and Payment to:**

The Arc of TN - Attn: Nicole Davidson 44 Vantage Way, Suite 550 Nashville, TN 37228

**Questions? Call 615-298-1080, ext. 26, 1-800-287-9636, ext. 26 TTY: 615-298-2474**

*Cash Contributions will be accepted to help defray conference expenses.*

\*Please see next page for Stipend Application, Accommodations and Respite Forms.

# Looking for a Job?????

Join us at:

## PROJECT INCOME

Presentations for Individuals with Disabilities and Family Members

Presentation for  
Individuals wanting to work

\*Written and Presented by working individuals with disabilities

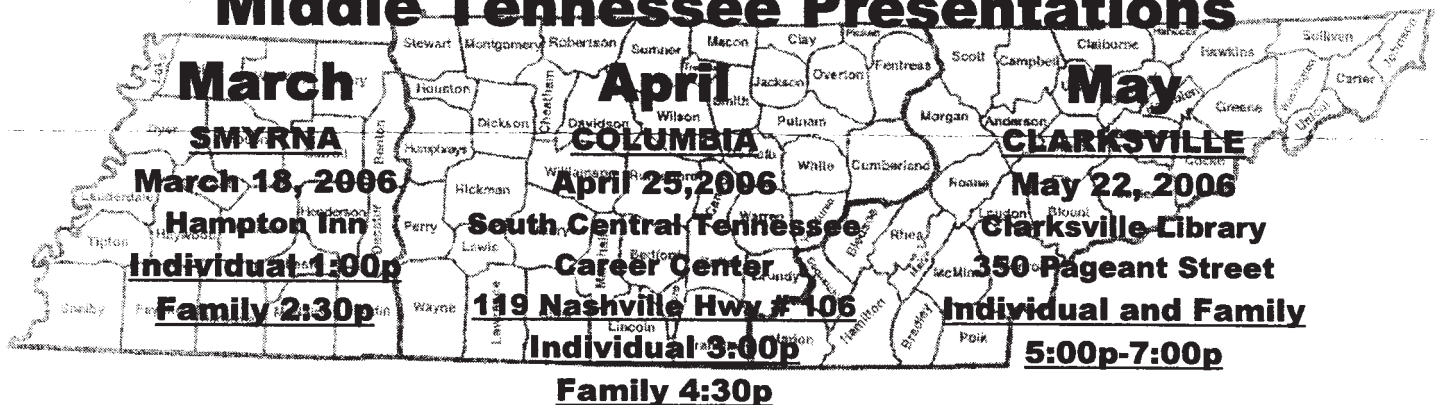
Presentation for  
Family Members

\*Written and Presented by family members of working individuals with disabilities

Project Income includes topics such as:

- \$ Employment 1<sup>st</sup> Initiative
- \$ Tips on getting a job
- \$ Fundamentals of employment
- \$ Job Coaches
- \$ Social Security
- \$ Fears about employment

### Middle Tennessee Presentations



Please R.S.V.P.

For more information call:

Shara Winton at 615-907-1724 or email: [tmainfo@bellsouth.net](mailto:tmainfo@bellsouth.net)

In order to update our records, we would appreciate you completing the form below with your current address, and if you have access to a computer, your email address. This will assist our office in making sure you receive future documentation needed and will keep you informed of changes or additional information you might need.

Please complete at your earliest convenience and return to:

DMRS - Attn: Patsy J. Holt  
15th Floor Andrew Jackson Bldg.  
500 Deaderick St.  
Nashville, TN 37243

or  
Patsy.J.Holt@state.tn.us

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-

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

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There are many acronyms and terms associated with the DMRS. In each issue of Personally Speaking we'll serve up a small portion of Division alphabet soup.

- ADD - Administration on Developmental Disabilities
  - HCFA - Health Care Financing Administration
  - IL - Independent Living
-

## Here We Are!

### Central Office

15th Floor, Andrew Jackson Building  
500 Deaderick St.  
Nashville, TN 37243  
615.532.6530  
[www.state.tn.us/dmrs](http://www.state.tn.us/dmrs)  
Stephen H. Norris, Deputy Commissioner

### West Regional Office

8383 Wolf Lake Dr.  
Bartlett, TN 38133  
901.213.1998  
Cate Newbanks, Director

### Middle Regional Office

275 Stewarts Ferry Pike  
Nashville, TN 37214  
615.231.5436  
Kathleen Clinton, Director

### East Regional Office

Greenbriar Cottage  
5908 Lyons View Dr.  
Knoxville, TN 37919  
865.588.0508, ext. 119  
John Craven, Director

### Arlington

#### Developmental Center

11293 Memphis-Arlington Rd.  
PO Box 586  
Arlington, TN 38002-0586  
901.745.7200  
Leon Owens, Chief Officer

### Clover Bottom Developmental Center

275 Stewarts Ferry Pike  
Nashville, TN 37214-0500  
615.231.5000  
Levi Harris, Chief Officer

### Greene Valley Developmental Center

4850 E. Andrew Johnson Highway  
PO Box 910  
Greeneville, TN 37744-0910  
423.787.6800  
Henry Meece, Chief Officer

## Personally Speaking Listens!

Personally Speaking is a Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, Division of Mental Retardation Services' bi-monthly publication, targeting DMRS stakeholders, which appears on the DMRS website and in print. Personally Speaking is written and produced by the DMRS Office of Communications.

Got ideas or opinions? Send them our way!

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